

11 August 1987

FILE ONLY

WASHINGTON

The United States could lessen the mine risk in the Persian Gulf by simply ignoring the narrow shipping channel Iran claims gulf traffic must use to stay safe, a former CIA director said today. DIR

Stansfield Turner, head of the intelligence agency in the Carter administration, wrote in the opinion pages of Tuesday's New York Times if Iran then challenged the U.S. right to international waters, it could threaten to mine Iran's harbors and cut off the oil exports that prop up Iran's wartime economy.

The re-flagged supertanker Bridgeton, under escort from U.S. warships, struck a mine July 24 while using a narrow 2-mile path in a 60-mile-wide deep water channel, an area Iran has declared international shipping can use to avoid attack.

The United States is rushing mine-sweeping assets to the gulf, but Turner argued it is not necessary. The area could be swept, he said, but "the other technique is simply to avoid the mines by steering ships clear of them. ... It would be almost impossible for Iran to mine all of the waters in the area where the Bridgeton was hit and, besides, doing so would impede Iran's own tankers."

The risk of hitting a mine would be far less if convoys zig-zagged across the larger channel, he said.

"So why aren't the re-flagged tankers using the whole gulf? It is because the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini has restricted international shipping to a narrow zone. At the point the Bridgeton was hit, the convoy had been within that 2-mile slice of the 60-mile-wide channel. No wonder the Iranians knew so certainly where to plant the mines."

"The key question is: Why are we respecting Iran's restrictions" on shipping areas? wrote Turner.

"Violating these restrictions and avoiding the mines is our best recourse. It is unfair to send men and ships continually toward the mine risks within the narrow channels. If Iran is going to take us on, at least it should do so openly," he said.

He said to reduce the chance of armed conflict the United States should tell Iran of the consequences of challenging U.S. access to international waters.

"The way to prove we mean business is to bring to the gulf large numbers of the very weapons Iran is using against us: mines. Then, if Iran persists on interfering with the ships we are protecting, we should mine Iran's harbors. The Navy could easily lay enough mines to cut off sea commerce between Iran and the outside world, thereby cutting off all Iranian oil exports, its principal source of foreign exchange," Turner wrote.

Turner said the United States "cannot afford to be pushed out of the Persian Gulf as we were pushed out of Beirut. Better that we not give the ayatollah any such hope by continuing supinely to obey his illegal dictate about where we can sail our ships. There really is no choice other than to avoid the mines by using the zone in which Iran has tried to exclude us and to be prepared for what the consequences might be."

Gulf truce raises hopes for hostages

The Washington Post
The New York Times
The Washington Times
The Wall Street Journal
The Christian Science Monitor
New York Daily News
USA Today 1-A
The Chicago Tribune

Date 8 August 1988

By Don Kirk
USA TODAY

U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar today announces the date of a truce in the eight-year-old war between Iran and Iraq.

Perez de Cuellar, emerging from an hour with the Security Council, said Sunday the two nations had "agreed with a cease-fire followed by direct talks under my auspices."

He did not say when the truce would take effect — though he earlier indicated it could begin in 10 days.

"We are on the road to peace," said Iraq's U.N. Ambassador Ismat Kittani.

A truce could promote:

► Freedom for the 16 hostages now held in Beirut — nine of them U.S. citizens.

Former CIA director Stansfield Turner sees "the makings of a deal that is acceptable."

Turner suggested that the United States, despite its denials, should bargain for release of the hostages. The U.S. card: \$2 billion in Iranian assets frozen by the United States.

► Reduction of the U.S. Navy force in the Persian Gulf.

If a cease-fire took effect, the United States would probably pull out its extra ships, sent to the Persian Gulf more than a year ago to escort Kuwaiti tankers flying U.S. flags.

"The Navy has been looking for an excuse to downsize its force," said Brian McCartan of the Center for Defense Information. He predicted the Navy would keep six ships in the gulf — down from today's 16.

► Improvement in U.S.-Iranian relations.

A cease-fire "removes one of the obstacles" to talks with Iran, said Gary Sick, ex-National Security Council staffer who helped engineer the January 1981 release of 52 hostages held in Iran for 444 days.

He warned, however, of "tremendous sensitivity in the United States about being seen dealing with hostage-takers and the like."

Iran is believed to hold major influence over Hezbollah, captors of nine U.S. hostages held in Lebanon.

But it isn't certain that the impact of the Iran-Iraq war truce will reach far enough to improve the hostages' chances of release.

"I wouldn't say the Iranians decided each capture," said Stansfield Turner, former CIA director. But "if they dictate to those people they will jump," he added.

A Christian Beirut newspaper said Sunday that some of the 16 foreign hostages were held in the Iranian Embassy. Others were in a Hezbollah barracks 52 miles northeast of Beirut and in a southern Beirut hideout, said the newspaper Al-Diyar.

Added Turner, CIA director while then-President Carter worked to win the release of 53 U.S. hostages from Tehran: "If the Iranians want some of these hostages released, they will do that."

Iran and Iraq have been fighting since September 1980. Some reasons for the war — and its implications:

What caused the war?

Iraq — ruled by Sunni Moslems — attacked Iran first. Iraq was responding to Iran's efforts at spreading its militant Shiite Moslem faith. Iran countered, capturing significant parts of Iraqi territory.

Who's winning the war now?

Iraq this year has recaptured most of the territory taken by Iran, draining Iran's limited military resources and stirring divisions within Iran.

Which country is bigger?

Iraq has only 16 million people in an area of 172,476 square miles compared with Iran's 50

million people in 636,363.

Why is Iraq stronger?

Iraq receives a steady supply of arms from the Soviet Union and also buys French and other weapons. Iran, equipped with U.S. weapons supplied while the shah was in power, is running out of spare parts and new equipment.

What are total casualties?

A million people have died on both sides; neither country releases statistics on injuries.

The economic impact?

Both Iran and Iraq have suffered blows to their oil facilities — and to ships carrying both crude oil and petroleum products elsewhere.

Will oil output go up now?

Probably not. Iraq is exporting the quota set by OPEC through pipelines via Jordan and Turkey. Iran still exports most of its oil by sea. Neither wants to increase output into glutted world markets.

What about the Persian Gulf?

Ships should be free to go up and down the gulf unhampered by Iraqi or Iranian attack. Foreign — notably U.S. — warships would be able to scale back their missions.

— Don Kirk

Approved For Release 2005/12/23 : CIA-RDP91-00901R000600390002-1

ST LOUIS POST DISPATCH

JUL 24 1987

U.S. Must Retaliate If Iran Attacks, Ex-CIA Director Says Here

By Jo Mannies

Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

Former CIA director Stansfield Turner says the United States must be prepared to destroy Iran's air force and bomb its cities if Iran attacks the reflagged Kuwaiti ships being escorted by American warships through the Persian Gulf.

"If one of those ships gets hit, it's a crisis," Turner said in a speech Thursday before the St. Louis Regional Commerce & Growth Association at the Clarion Hotel.

"We will have to attack — and attack hard."

The United States has no choice but to respond with force because "I don't think we can accept a third humiliation at the feet of Khomeini," he said, referring to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Iran's leader.

The first humiliation, Turner said, was the holding from 1979 to 1981 of 52 American hostages for 444 days; the second was the undercover sale of arms to Iran last year in a futile attempt to free American hostages held in Lebanon.

Turner conceded to the 850-member audience that such a harsh military response by the United States might spark a new round of terrorist acts against Americans.

An American attack on Iran also might invite intervention by the Soviet Union, which has a pact with Iran, he said.

"The stakes are high in this effort in the Persian Gulf that started yesterday (Wednesday)," Turner said. The world is watching whether "Iran will try to knock the chip off the shoulder of the United States."

Turner said he personally disagreed with President Ronald Reagan's decision to fly American flags on the Kuwaiti ships, but he supports the efforts to protect shipping in the

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Persian Gulf. "There is a difference."

He said any disagreement was now immaterial because "we must support the president."

The Reagan administration's sale of arms to Iran "added to a series of mistakes made by the Carter administration" in its dealings with Iran, he said. A retired admiral, Turner headed the Central Intelligence Agency under former President Jimmy Carter.

He said officials were naive to think the arms scheme would secure the hostages' release. And the sale — at a time when we were telling our allies not to do so — made the United States appear to be deliberately deceptive, he said.

But Turner said he understood Reagan's frustration and "sense of humanity" that led to the unsuccessful undercover dealings.

Turner contended that those same feelings were behind Carter's efforts to free the 52 hostages. Turner gave a detailed account of the behind-the-scenes planning for the covert military attempt to free the hostages on April 24, 1980. In that failed attempt, eight servicemen were killed in a crash of a U.S. helicopter and a C-130 transport plane. The crash occurred during an evacuation in the Iranian desert — after the mission had been canceled.

Turner endorsed some undercover activities by the CIA. But he said that his successor at the CIA, the late William J. Casey, and other members of Reagan's administration appeared to have used covert activities to skirt the law and keep Congress in the dark.



Stanfield Turner
"We will have to attack"

He said it was improper for the administration to use covert activities to aid the Nicaraguan rebels, known as Contras, in their drive to overthrow the Nicaraguan government at a time when Congress was blocking aid.

"If there is not a consensus on a foreign policy move, it is not wise for the president to do covertly what he could not publicly," Turner said. "The public should think a lot about this philosophy of government that we have heard" during the congressional hearings on the Iran-Contra scandal.

Turner contended that the testimony of Rear Adm. John M. Poindexter, former national security adviser, and of Poindexter's key aide, Lt. Colonel Oliver L. North, revealed that the administration favored a government where many key dealings were conducted in secret and where lying to Congress was acceptable.

"I do not believe that officials of our government — or your corporations — can lie to each other" and operate effectively, Turner said.

In an interview later, Turner dismissed the contention of some officials in Reagan's administration that they avoided telling Congress about some covert activities because the officials feared leaks that could compromise the undercover operations.

"Never did we have a leak from Congress after a briefing," Turner said. "Most of my problems with leaks were from within the White House."

Secret activities must be known to Congress, he said, "otherwise you have unchecked executive power."

He also blasted North for his testimony advocating total loyalty to supervisors. "You only carry out orders of a president whose actions you think are legal or ethical," Turner said.

Turner praised the new CIA director, former FBI head William Webster, as "a man of tremendous integrity, tremendous ability" who will restore confidence in the agency. But Turner added that he feared Congress would respond to the Iran-Contra scandal by passing new laws that "tighten the noose around the CIA more than they should."

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